

## **BLM Euthanasia Methods**

When necessary for humane reasons, the BLM euthanizes wild horses using methods recommended by the American Veterinarian Medical Association in their Guidelines on Euthanasia (June 2007). Acceptable methods for the euthanasia of large animals that are used include gunshot to the brain and intravenous injection of a pharmaceutical preparation (pentobarbital). Both of these methods are humane and accepted within the veterinary medical community.

### **Short-term Holding Facilities**

Intravenous injection is used when a veterinarian is available and the carcass can be disposed of by burial or a rendering facility. If these conditions cannot be met and an animal needs to be euthanized immediately to prevent suffering (such as a fractured leg) a firearm is used.

### **Gather Site**

A firearm is the primary method used during gather activities. Veterinarians are not always immediately available on-site and BLM gather contractors and wild horse specialists are trained to euthanize wild horses by gunshot.

A firearm is the preferred method at gathers because the remains can be left on the public lands for scavenger animals to consume and there are no risks of residues of pharmaceutical agents entering the food chain. When a veterinarian is present the method selected for euthanasia is at his or her discretion depending on the situation at hand and resources available for carcass disposal.